

Present: Dan Chavre, Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott; Miranda Leidich, vice-chair; Joan Michaels; Ed Miller; Anirudh Sanhi, chair; Carla Saulter

Excused: Dwight Baker; Tina Shereen

Provisional Members: Laila Barr, Roger Thordarson

Staff: Barbara de Michele, Community Relations Planner; Transit Police Chief Dave Jutilla; Transit Police Operations Commander Lisa Pepin; Transit Police Administrative Captain Scott Strathy; Anna Clemenger, Community Relations Editor

Sahni opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. He announced that Holly Plackett has resigned from the TAC. She and her husband recently sold their house in Redmond and will be moving to Ocean Shores. Members expressed appreciation for Plackett's service to TAC.

Transit Police

Chief Jutilla gave a Powerpoint presentation outlining the duties and responsibilities of the Metro Transit Police. The force has evolved quickly over the past few years to a full-time dedicated professional force. In 2003 the Transit Police force consisted of 26 off-duty police officers which mostly patrolled in Seattle. This year, Metro's goal is to have 58 full-time officers patrolling throughout the Metro system. The force includes patrol officers, "bees" (bicycle officers), detectives, undercover and plain clothes officers, bomb disposal experts, facilities security officers, an operator liaison to assist hurt or injured bus drivers, and clerical staff. Also included: "Stevie," the bomb-sniffing labrador and his trainer, Tim Morgan.

In 2007, the Transit Police issued 1500 citations as a result of increased attention to policing through an enlarged force. Metro can suspend riders for a period of time, or for life. In 2007, the number of assaults on drivers fell by 28%. Passenger assaults also declined dramatically, although Jutilla pointed out that Metro has relatively few passenger assaults given the size of the system (340 passenger assaults in 2007, among 120 million boardings). "If people and operators don't feel safe, then Metro loses its mission," said Jutilla.

Jutilla said that the Transit Police receive strong support from the Executive and the Council. In 2009, Sound Transit will fund a force enhancement of 36 additional officers when LINK light rail comes online. Even so, King County is a vast area and officers must be assigned strategically. Cameras have been installed on over 250 buses. Transit operators are asked to fill out safety reports at the end of each day, and the Transit Police conduct "emphasis patrols" in areas where incidents increase. They work closely with Seattle police, as well as police in other jurisdictions, to ensure that problems don't simply move to other areas of town. Metro has a good working relationship with state and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as the Department of Homeland Security.

Jutilla, Pepin and Strayther answered questions from TAC members regarding individual routes, safety concerns, park and ride lot security, and others. Following their presentation, TAC members expressed their appreciation for the presentation. Chair Sahni promised to commend the Transit Police at the next Regional Transit Committee meeting, and the group directed de Michele and Sahni to send a thank you letter to Chief Jutilla.

Metro Website and Trip Planner

The website/TripPlanner sub-committee (Sahni, Leidich, Miller, Saulter) reported on their progress to the TAC. Leidich presented a draft outline for discussion. The TAC gave approval to proceed based on the outline. The group will report again in May, with a more detailed draft for review. The sub-committee would like to have a final document for presentation to Councilmember Dunn in June.

Sahni adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.